

Repentance

Introduction:

- A. Recent editorials in our local “Greenville News” about sodomy helped prompt this sermon, for Dr. Bob Jones, III wrote of Jesus Christ’s inclusive love of sinners ... but did not mention repentance.
 - 1. Let us be clear ... there is only room at the cross for Muslims or sodomites, if they truly repent!
 - 2. Let us be clear ... Jesus only befriended and ate with repentant sinners (Matthew 9:9-13; etc.)!
 - 3. Let us be clear ... Jesus came for sinners, not the righteous (Mark 2:17; Luke 5:32; I Tim 1:15).
 - 4. Let us be clear ... the identifying mark of the sinners Jesus came for was their godly repentance!
- B. But there are other reasons that demand this study of a very common word and concept in scripture.
 - 1. Repentance is absolutely necessary to please God, so His blessing or cursing is dependent on it.
 - 2. Repentance is ignored or rejected more and more in evangelical churches and Christian media.
 - 3. Repentance is increasingly denied as essential for the salvation event of the Arminian scheme.
 - 4. Repentance is often overlooked when making Biblical and practical judgments about sinners.
 - 5. Repentance is a forgotten word and concept, and we need a good definition and application of it.
- C. The Arminian scheme of salvation has been watered down to where it is far worse than mere heresy.
 - 1. It is bad enough to reject God’s sovereign election of sinners and offer decisional regeneration.
 - 2. They are so intent on making this “decision” easy for everyone that they reject Christ’s lordship.
 - 3. Of course, if you need not own Jesus as Lord, you certainly need not bother with repentance!
- D. There is nothing like a Bible study of repentance to destroy self-righteousness in your heart or mind.
 - 1. Like Pharisees of old, the self-righteous gaze down from their ivory towers ignoring repentance.
 - 2. There can be no discussion of sin in hardly any context without carefully considering repentance.
 - 3. Any sin or sinner can be forgiven and fully cleared through repentance, no matter your feelings.
- E. For 30 years, II Chron 7:14 has been used like a mantra for America’s ills, but it demands repentance!
- F. Repentance is much more difficult than saying the word, for it involves your total self and total life.
- G. We can begin with the first entrance of sin into the world, when Adam and Eve would not repent.
 - 1. Instead of repenting, they sought to cover their shame by fig leaves and guilt by hiding from God.
 - 2. Instead of seeking the LORD to confess their sin and beg for His forgiveness, they hid from Him.
 - 3. Instead of accepting His reproofs and repudiating their wickedness, they blamed others for it.
 - 4. All decay, failure, pain, rust, sickness, trouble, and death can be traced back to two unrepentants!
 - 5. If you despise these two rebels, and you should, then think of what God wants you to repent of!
- H. If you feel distant from the Lord and without His blessing, then humble yourself and repent! Today!

It Is Important!

- A. Repentance is key to the true religion of God, for it is emphasized in both testaments, with texts far too numerous to mention here, but some of which are listed in the following points.
 - 1. There is no practical mercy, peace, or blessings from God without godly, true repentance.
 - 2. There is no claim, assurance, evidence, or proof of eternal life without godly repentance.
 - 3. It is how sinful men must deal with a holy God, and through Jesus Christ, God accepts it.
 - 4. John the Baptist’s ministry, the greatest born of women, was for repentance (Matt 3:1-2).
 - 5. Jesus Christ’s ministry, God’s Son, was for repentance (Mark 1:14-15; Matt 21:28-32).
 - 6. The apostles’ ministry was repentance (Mark 6:12; Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38; 20:21; 26:20).
- B. Let me get your attention! You do not have forever to repent, as the Bible clearly warns you.
 - 1. Hardening against reproofs will bring sudden and irremediable destruction (Prov 29:1).
 - 2. Jesus only gave a false prophetess in the Thyatira church a space to repent (Rev 2:20-23).
 - 3. Your death or the final Day of Judgment makes it very important to repent of sins today!

- C. God's longsuffering for your repentance is why Jesus Christ has not yet returned (II Pet 3:9).
1. Some, like John Owen, see this passage as pertaining to the Jewish destruction of 70AD.
 2. However, the destruction of the heaven and earth like Noah's flood is the context (3:5-7).
 3. There was a Jewish perishing coming, which Peter had taught (Acts 2:40), but not here
 4. We understand this text is for God's elect, the *us-ward*, who shall never perish eternally.
 5. Peter wrote the elect (I Pet 1:2; II Pet 1:10), so the *usward*, *any*, and *all* are God's elect.
 6. The perishing they are to avoid is a practical perishing, for no elect can perish eternally.
 7. Therefore, God's longsuffering holds back Christ's coming for all God's elect to repent.
 8. A delayed coming applies to us more than them, so we give 3:9 a perpetual application.
 9. The perishing is falling from holiness and truth. Compare 2:20-22 with 3:11,14,17,18.
 10. The perishing is temporal trouble or judgment only, as in I Cor 8:11 and its context.
 11. If you think this is a stretch of interpretation, what do you do with Acts 2:38 and 22:16?
 12. Cut the confusion about this text! God is going to burn up this earth! Repent! Today!
- D. How important is repentance? It is the basis for living accepted with God (Ezekiel 18:21-32).
- E. How important is it? God will abundantly pardon beyond comprehension (Isaiah 55:6-9)!
- F. How important is repentance? God's angels rejoice over one repenting sinner (Luke 15:10)!
- G. A repentant prostitute is better than a "righteous" wife (Luke 7:36-50; 15:7; Mark 16:9).
- H. God let Gentile nations wander in ignorance, but now commands them to repent (Ac 17:30).
- I. It is a foundational truth of the gospel, which we should understand and do well (Heb 6:1-2).
- J. When Jesus Christ addressed the churches of Asia, He said, "Repent!" (Rev 2:5,16; 3:3,19).
- K. Readers! Any sin can be easily forgiven by true repentance (I Cor 6:9-11; II Cor 2:6-8; etc.).
- L. Since it is so important, it is our great ambition for every elect sinner to repent (Rom 10:1)!

What Is It?

- A. **Repent.** To feel contrition, compunction, sorrow, or regret for something one has done or left undone; to change one's mind with regard to past action or conduct through dissatisfaction with it or its results. [OED]
1. The English *repent* is from Latin *re-* for going back again and Latin *penitent*. [OED]
 2. **Penitent.** That repents, with serious purpose to amend the sin or wrongdoing; repentant, contrite. [OED]
 3. Thus, repentance is to return back to where one should be by deep sorrow and regret for errors, with the intention to make necessary amends to rectify the condition or situation.
 4. It is related to conversion, or turning from error and sin to truth and righteousness, for the Bible connects the two closely (Acts 3:19; Jas 5:19-20; John 12:40; Psalm 51:13).
 5. **Convert.** To turn (a thing or oneself) about, to give a different (or specific) direction to. To turn in mind, feeling, or conduct; to bring into another state (of mind, etc.). To cause to turn to and embrace a (specified) religious faith, usually implying that the turning is to truth from error or ignorance. To cause to turn from a sinful or irreligious life to one marked by love of God and pursuit of holiness; to turn to godliness. [OED]
 6. It is more than sorrow for sin, for sorrow for sin should lead to repentance (II Cor 7:9).
 7. **Contrite.** Crushed or broken in spirit by a sense of sin, and so brought to complete penitence. [OED]
 8. Repentance includes confession (Ps 32:5), grief (Luke 22:62), humility (Lev 26:41), submission (Acts 9:6), reformation (Lev 26:23), repudiation (Job 40:4), restitution (Luke 19:8), righteousness (Matt 19:21), and sorrow (Ps 38:18), among other aspects.
 9. It is related to confession, but more than that (Job 33:27-28; Ps 32:5; Pr 28:13; I Jn 1:9).

- B. The Holy Spirit gave a very thorough definition and explanation in one text (II Cor 7:9-11).
1. There is repentance, and there is repentance. You must identify false and true repentance.
 2. The sorrow they felt from his first epistle resulted in godly sorrow and true repentance, which was no damaging result at all, but rather their salvation and clearing of themselves.
 3. Salvation here is not election, justification, regeneration, or glorification, but conversion.
 4. Godly sorrow saves from a sinful course of life, without regret or rejection: there is no damage in godly repentance that causes a converted person to regret or withdraw it.
 5. Worldly sorrow brings death by sadness at getting caught or fear of loss or punishment.
 6. The inspired definition of godly repentance has no peer in Scripture or anywhere else.
 7. If you seek evidence of whether a person has been truly converted or not, come here!
 8. The “selfsame thing” is that the Corinthians illustrated the very thing described – godly sorrow working salvation not to be repented of – in contrast to the sorrow of the world.
 9. The seven things that wholly cleared this church from wickedness form a holy standard.
 - a. Carefulness! Anxious, concerned, fearful, and worried efforts to amend error and sin.
 - b. Clearing of yourselves! Reversal of spirit and actions proving different character.
 - c. Indignation! Anger at the foolishness and profanity of sin and their protection of it.
 - d. Fear! Intimidation and reverence of God’s holy standards and need to correct things.
 - e. Vehement desire! They were passionately inflamed and adamant to set things straight.
 - f. Zeal! They had intense commitments and conduct without procrastination to do right.
 - g. Revenge! They did anything and everything necessary to make up for their failure.
 10. The glory of the gospel of the grace of Jesus Christ is its total clearing of repenting sinners, which puts it in stark contrast to the merciless, long memories of wicked men.
 11. Though this church had been notoriously at fault, they were totally clear of the matter.
 12. Jesus freely and fully forgave sinners that came to Him in humble repentance for sins.
 13. Whether David or Peter, both great sinners, repentance cleared them for great usefulness.
 14. In fact, Paul’s conversion was to be a perpetual pattern of forgiveness (I Tim 1:12-16).
- C. Holy Spirit inspired synonyms and related expressions found in the Bible should help further.
1. Daniel exhorted Nebuchadnezzar to *break off* his sins and *show* mercy (Daniel 4:27).
 2. It is often called *turning* ... from sin ... to God (Deut 30:10; II Chron 7:14; 30:9; Pr 1:23; Isaiah 31:6; 59:20; Jer 3:14; 26:3; Lam 3:40-41; Ezek 14:6, 18:28,30; 33:11; Hos 12:6; 14:1-3; Joel 2:12; Jonah 3:10; Zec 1:3; Luke 1:16; Acts 11:21; 26:18; etc., etc.).
 3. It is often called *returning* ... from sin ... back to God (Deut 30:1-3,8; I Sam 7:3; I Kgs 8:48; II Chr 6:38; 30:9; Job 22:23; 36:10; Ps 90:3; Is 10:21; 19:22; 44:22; 55:7; Jer 3:1,12-13,22; 4:1; 5:3; 8:5; 15:7; 18:11; 23:14; 24:7; 35:15; 36:3,7; Ezek 13:22; 18:23; Hos 3:5; 6:1; 7:10,16; 14:1-3; Mal 3:7; I Pet 2:25).
 4. It is called *amending* your ways and doings (Jer 7:3; 26:13; 35:15).
 5. It is called *thoroughly amending* your ways and your doings (Jer 7:5).
 6. It is called *confessing and humbling* uncircumcised hearts (Lev 26:40-42).
 7. It is *calling on* God, *seeking* Him, *humbling*, *praying*, and *turning from sin* (II Chr 7:14).
 8. It is accepting chastisement, committing to godliness, and begging help (Job 34:31-32).
 9. It is preparing your heart putting iniquity far away from yourself (Job 11:13-15).
 10. It is admitting God right, you wrong, and your choice vain (Job 33:27-28; Neh 9:33-35).
 11. It is returning from evil and making your ways and doings good (Jer 18:11).
 12. It is called circumcising your heart, or cutting off rebellion and sinfulness (Jer 4:4).
 13. It is called mourning for iniquity like doves (Eze 7:16; Pr 5:11-14; Jer 31:18-19; 50:4-5).
 14. It is called loathing yourself for your iniquity (Ezek 36:31; Job 42:6; Is 64:6; Rom 6:21).

15. It is called humbling oneself (II Chron 12:12; 32:26; 33:12; Luke 18:13-14; Jas 4:8-10).
16. It is being ashamed and confounded (Jer 31:19; Ezek 16:61-63; 20:43; 36:31; Job 42:6).
17. It is called having a new heart and new spirit (Ezek 18:31; Rom 8:13; 12:2).
18. It is called acknowledging their offence and seeking God early (Hos 5:15).
19. It is taking words with you and turning to God with commitment and praise (Hos 14:1-3).
20. It is rending your heart and turning to the Lord for forgiveness (Joel 2:13).
21. It is hating evil, loving good, and establishing judgment in your influence (Amos 5:15).
22. It can and often did involve sackcloth and ashes to show great sincerity (Luke 10:13).
23. It can and often did involve weeping and chastening one's soul (Ps 69:10; Dan 10:12).
24. It is humble submission to God's righteous indignation and holy judgment (Micah 7:9).
25. It involves turning to God and doing works consistent with such a turn (Acts 26:20).
26. It is turning yourself from sin, afflicting yourself, and humbling yourself (James 4:8-10).
27. It is thinking on your ways and turning to the Lord with haste (Ps 119:59-60; Lam 3:40).
28. It is laying all sins and foolishness aside to follow the word of God perfectly (Jas 1:21).
29. It is more than ceremonial, formal, ritualistic, or public worship (Isaiah 1:10-20; 58:1-7).

Examples of Words

- A. *Elihu* said it well by admitting sin, perversion of right, and the vain results (Job 33:27-28).
- B. *David's* prayer of repentance is a thorough and well-known example (II Sam 12:13; Ps 51).
- C. *David* said, I have sinned greatly; take away my iniquity; I have been foolish (II Sam 24:10).
- D. *Ezra* said, I am ashamed, our iniquities are great, and we surely deserve worse (Ezra 9:4-14).
- E. *Isaiah* said, Woe is me, for I am a sinner by speech, and my nation sins by speech (Is 6:5).
- F. *Israel* said, I was rightly chastised like a bull, and my sins caused me shame (Jer 31:18-19).
- G. *Daniel* told *Nebuchadnezzar* to break of his sins and show mercy to the poor (Daniel 4:27).
- H. *Some Jews, publicans, and soldiers* kept asking, What shall we do then (Luke 3:10-14)?
- I. *The prodigal* said, I have sinned, and I should be only a servant, not a son (Luke 15:17-21).
- J. *A publican* prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner," which God accepted (Luke 18:13-14).
- K. *The thief* said, after ending his cursing, Lord, remember me in thy kingdom (Luke 23:42).
- L. *Saul of Tarsus* asked the Lord Jesus what he could do for him, and then did it (Acts 9:1-9).

Examples of Works

- A. *David* sought mercy through fasting and lying on the ground seven days (II Sam 12:15-18).
- B. *Ahab* rent his clothes, wore and slept in sackcloth, fasted, and went softly (I Kings 21:27-29).
- C. *Josiah* rent his clothes and immediately pursued God's will in the matter (II Kings 22:10-13).
- D. *Asa* put away idols, fixed the temple, demoted momma, made an oath, etc. (II Chr 15:8-15).
- E. *Manasseh* sought the LORD, humbled himself greatly, and prayed (II Chronicles 33:11-13).
- F. *Proselytes* separated themselves from the filthiness of their pagan neighbors (Ezra 6:21-22).
- G. *Ezra* led Israel to celebrate the word of God and restore the feast of booths (Neh 8:9-18).
- H. *Jews* fasted with sackcloth and dirt, separated themselves, confessed, and read (Neh 9:1-3).
- I. *Nineveh* fasted, put on sackcloth, cried mightily to God, and turned from evil (Jonah 3:5-10).
- J. *Zacchaeus* stated he would give 50% to the poor and restore 400% for wrongs (Luke 19:8).
- K. *Peter* wept bitterly after being convicted of his denials (Matt 26:75; Mark 14:72; Lu 22:62).
- L. *Three thousand Jews* repented, were baptized, and committed to the church (Acts 2:38-47).
- M. *Ephesus* believed and confessed, but also showed and burned their books (Acts 19:18-20).
- N. *Thessalonica* turned from idols to the true God and began waiting for Christ (I Thess 1:9-10).

Inadequate Repentance

- A. Temporary sorrow is not true repentance; true repentance is lasting (II Cor 7:10; John 8:31).
- B. Sorrow for getting caught is not true repentance, for the real pain should be offending God.
- C. *Adam* did not repent, though he should have; he hid and blamed Eve for the sin (Gen 3:8-12).
- D. *Eve* did not repent, though she should have; she hid and blamed the devil for it (Gen 3:13).
- E. *Cain* did not repent; he excused himself and complained of his punishment (Genesis 4:8-14).
- F. *Judas* did not truly repent, or he would have sought the Lover of sinners, who had forgiven many others before his very eyes, rather than commit suicide (Matt 27:3-10; Acts 1:15-20).
- G. Singing, “*God Bless America*,” after America’s tragedy of 9/11 is not repentance in any way.
- H. Outward affliction without reformation of character and life is vain (Isaiah 1:10-20; 58:3-7).
- I. Seeing how much of the world you can have and still be God’s is not repentance (Jas 4:40).
- J. If you think you can hide your sins and get away with it, you are terribly wrong (Prov 28:13).
- K. Faith without works is dead; devils tremble before God, but they do not repent (Jas 2:14-26).
- L. Making up excuses for what you did or did not do is not true repentance (I Sam 15:14-35).

Adequate Repentance

- A. A *broken and contrite heart and spirit* is a sacrifice God will not reject (Psalm 34:18; 51:17).
- B. God sees and dwells with those who have a *contrite heart and spirit* (Isaiah 57:15; 66:2).
- C. Anything short of II Corinthians 7:10-11 must be suspect, for this is the Spirit’s definition.
- D. True repentance is of such a nature that it could swallow a person in his grief (II Cor 2:6-8).
- E. True repentance includes amending your ways as described above, not just saying words.
- F. Fasting, sackcloth, and ashes can be appropriate, but only if they represent the heart and life.
- G. True repentance requires it of those under your authority, as Josiah and Asa (II Chr 15:8-18).
- H. True repentance requires fruits, or works of righteousness (Matt 3:8; Acts 26:20; Luke 19:8).

Why Is Repentance Unpopular?

- A. No natural man wants to be told he must repudiate, reject, and stop doing something he likes in order to do something else that God requires.
- B. No natural man wants to humble himself before his Creator and acknowledge Him to be right and his own thoughts, proclivities, and actions to be unacceptable and worthy of damnation.
- C. Preaching repentance thins crowds, for most people want to be soothed, not condemned.
- D. It is not spoken or taught by seeker-sensitive types, for their unregenerate crowd would leave.
- E. CCM artists do not speak or sing it, for their unregenerate market would not buy their goods.
- F. Church growth gurus do not speak or suggest it, for it never increases attendance numbers.
- G. Repentance is so unpopular, the salvation mantra has been reduced to ignore Jesus as Lord.
- H. Decisional regeneration has been dumbed down in Arminian schemes until it is nothing.

Where Does It Come From?

- A. Repentance is a gift from God that He may or may not give (II Tim 2:25-26 cp John 12:40).
- B. When the apostles heard about Cornelius believing, they knew God had given it (Acts 11:18).
- C. In either testament, it is God that gives it (Job 36:10; Ezek 11:19; Zech 12:10; Acts 5:31).
- D. It is God that must turn a man or a nation back to Himself (I Kgs 18:37; Jeremiah 31:18-19).
- E. It is God that opens hearts as in the case of Lydia to respond to the gospel (Acts 16:14).
- F. God gives new hearts and changes hearts to fit them to repent and believe (Eze 11:19; 36:26).
- G. God is the first cause by ordaining purpose; then we act by the Spirit’s power (Phil 2:12-13).

- H. Another secondary cause of repentance is the riches of God's goodness to men (Romans 2:4).
- I. David knew the necessity of God's intervention to give him a new heart and spirit (Ps 51:10).
- J. God's word builds faith, which brings repentance, as Josiah (Rom 10:17; II Kings 22:10-13).
- K. Preaching is to turn men from sin to holiness (Luke 1:16-17; Acts 26:15-20; II Cor 5:9-11).

God May Reject Repentance

- A. Israel at brink of Canaan pushed the LORD too far, and they were rejected (Num 14:39-45).
- B. Esau was so profane as to despise his precious birthright (Hebrews 12:16-17; Gen 27:31-40).
- C. Judas may have "repented," but it was entirely unacceptable (Matt 27:3-10; Acts 1:15-20).
- D. You do not have forever to repent, for the LORD does not owe it to you (Pr 29:1; Rev 2:21).

Enemies of Repentance

- A. Pride that will not fall before God or man for wrongdoing ... but loves to find fault in others.
- B. Self-righteousness that measures ones standing with God by their own imagination and rules.
- C. Bible ignorance about the horrible terribleness of sin, which proper preaching will declare.
- D. Deistic denial that God requires obeying His will and conforming our lives even in details.
- E. Humanistic religion that does not deal with sin and God's holiness makes it unnecessary.
- F. Lack of authority with teeth that demands performance and perfection makes it unbelievable.

Relation to Salvation

- A. The church at Jerusalem was surprised to hear that Cornelius had repented (Acts 11:1-18).
 - 1. They said, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (11:18).
 - 2. Repentance is not the condition for eternal life, for Cornelius was already born again; the salvation Peter brought was of claim, conversion, evidence, and assurance (11:14).
 - 3. Repentance is not the condition for eternal life – God's ordination is instead (Acts 13:48).
 - 4. The preposition *unto* makes repentance the claim, evidence, and assurance of eternal life.
 - 5. The strait gate and narrow way leads *unto* life, but this path is not a condition (Mat 7:14).
 - 6. Those losing their lives in this world would keep them *unto* life in the next (John 12:25).
 - 7. Jude wrote about keeping ourselves in the love of God *unto* eternal life (Jude 1:21).
 - 8. God may or may not give repentance, but He did so to some Gentiles (II Tim 2:25-26).
 - 9. God had long left Gentiles ignorant, but now commanded repentance (Acts 14:16; 17:30).
- B. Repentance is part of conversion, for both are turning or returning from one way to another.
 - 1. Therefore, repentance is part of the practical phase of salvation and no other phase.
 - 2. **Convert.** To turn (a thing or oneself) about, to give a different (or specific) direction to. To turn in mind, feeling, or conduct; to bring into another state (of mind, etc.). To cause to turn to and embrace a (specified) religious faith, usually implying that the turning is to truth from error or ignorance. To cause to turn from a sinful or irreligious life to one marked by love of God and pursuit of holiness; to turn to godliness.
 - 3. Repentance is a result of hearing of God's mercies and changing our lives (Rom 12:1-2).
 - 4. Repentance and conversion is something Peter did after denying Jesus Christ (Lu 22:32).
- C. Repentance has no meritorious or instrumental value in obtaining eternal life as a free gift.
- D. Without works, faith and repentance are vain; works cannot save us (Jas 2:14; Acts 26:20).
- E. The natural man is at enmity with God, and he will not believe the gospel, let alone repent and do righteousness (Luke 16:31; I Cor 1:17; 2:14; Rom 3:9-19; 8:7-8).
- F. We categorically reject decisional regeneration as having any basis in the Bible or in reality.
- G. A man with grace in his heart to properly repent is already elect, justified, regenerated, etc.

Relation to Faith

- A. Faith without the works of repentance is dead, for it is alone and worthless (James 2:14-26).
- B. Devils believe and tremble in their knowledge of God, but they do not repent (James 2:19).
- C. Adam and Eve believed there was a God, but they hid because they refused to repent to Him.
- D. Paul explained his ministry to the elders of Ephesus as repentance and faith (Acts 20:18-21).

Assistants or Means of Repentance

- A. The more we learn of God and His ways from His word, the more we are bound to repent.
 - 1. The greatness of God should move us to abhor ourselves and repent (Job 40:3-5; 42:5-6).
 - 2. The terror of the Lord and coming judgment should persuade us to repent (II Cor 5:9-11).
 - 3. The mercy of God and His abundant pardon should also move us (Ps 130:4; Is 55:6-9).
 - 4. The riches of God's goodness to us should cause us to delight in repentance (Rom 2:4).
- B. The preaching of God's word brings repentance (Ne 8:9; Ps 73:17; Act 14:15; I Thes 1:6-10).
- C. The reading of God's word should bring repentance (II Kgs 22:10-13; Ps 19:7-9; 119:9,104).
- D. Self-examination with meditative musing (Ps 119:59-60; 139:23-24; Lam 3:40; Ezek 18:28).
- E. Prayer for repentance will bring repentance (Ps 86:11; 119:35-37; Jer 31:18; Lam 5:21).
- F. Humility is necessary. Stop measuring yourself by men (Isaiah 57:15; 66:2; II Cor 10:12).
- G. Holy Spirit conviction is another means to repentance (John 16:7-14; Act 7:51; Rom 8:1-16).

Objects of repentance (what do we repent of?)

- A. Specific sins like David for Bathsheba and numbering Israel and Peter for denying Christ.
- B. We must repent of sins great and small, public and private, and of commission and omission.
- C. David included his sin nature received by birth (Psalm 51:5; 58:3; Job 14:4; Rom 7:18-24).
- D. General sinfulness like Daniel and Isaiah for the sinfulness of their nation (Da 9:1-19; Is 6:5).
- E. Ezekiel gave the lesson that God sees those who mourn for the sins around them (Ezek 9:4).
- F. Job confessed the sins of his sons, as the Spirit chose to illustrate his goodness (Job 1:4-5).

Burden to Repent

- A. The more we learn of God and His ways from His word, the more we are bound to repent.
 - 1. The greatness of God should move us to abhor ourselves and repent (Job 40:3-5; 42:5-6).
 - 2. The terror of the Lord and coming judgment should persuade us to repent (II Cor 5:9-11).
 - 3. The mercy of God and His abundant pardon should also move us (Ps 130:4; Is 55:6-9).
 - 4. The riches of God's goodness to us should cause us to delight in repentance (Rom 2:4).
- B. Compare presumptuous sins of knowledge against sins of ignorance (Ps 19:12-13; Lu 12:48).
- C. Once we learn of repentance, we must never despise or judge repentant sinners, because Jesus Christ forgave the worst of sinners as an example for us (I Tim 1:12-16; Mat 18:21-35).
- D. We should remember that the greatest sinners are often the greatest saints (Luke 7:36-50).
- E. We should remember the repentant love Him more than the self-righteous (Luke 15:25-32).
- F. Holier than thou attitudes miss the mark: they measure themselves by themselves (Is 65:1-7).
- G. Judging motes in other eyes while having beams yourself is sickening hypocrisy (Mat 7:2-5).
- H. We should never have the despising spirit of the Pharisee about the publican (Luke 18:9-14).

Balance of Repentance

- A. Repentance cannot be made too difficult or too easy. We must be as balanced as scripture.
- B. Catholic penance is heretical and folly, for God does not require our pain to forgive us; when He does chasten us with pain, He does it out of love and care, not taking payment for sins.
- C. Cutting or lashing yourself as prophets of Baal or superstitious Catholics is pagan and heresy.
- D. Long seasons of groveling in misery for your sins is not necessary i.e. Acts 16:32-34, etc.
- E. God does forgive, and He forgives more easily than we, as the scripture declares (Is 55:6-9).

Encouragement to Repent

- A. Jesus never rejects the repentant (Jn 6:37; 8:1-11; 21:15-19; Lu 7:36-50; 19:1-10; 23:42-43).
- B. He asks us to reason with Him of repentance, for He is so reasonable (Is 1:18-20; Rom 12:1).
- C. He pardons more abundantly and more easily than you can imagine (Is 55:6-9). Try Him!
- D. His ways are equal ... or they are unequal, because they are too gracious (Ezek 18:1-32)!
- E. He gave Saul of Tarsus an example and pattern for us to believe His grace (I Tim 1:12-16).

Conclusion:

1. What do you have to repent for today? Life or death is before you; blessing or cursing is before you.
2. If you feel distant from the Lord and without His blessing, then humble yourself and repent! Today!
3. You should never feel discouraged or destroyed about your sins ... you should repent and believe!
4. Repentance is not a boring subject! Repentance is a glorious subject! Repent and reap the benefits!

For Further Study:

1. The sermon outline, "Starting Over," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/sermons/pdf/starting-over.pdf>.
2. The sermon outline, "Vain Religion from Isaiah 58," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/sermons/pdf/vain-religion.pdf>.
3. The sermon outline, "Jesus Loves Losers," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/sermons/pdf/jesus-loves-losers.pdf>.
4. The sermon, "If We Confess Our Sins," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/sermons/pdf/if-we-confess-our-sins.pdf>.
5. The sermon, "Salvation By Works," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/sermons/pdf/salvation-by-works.pdf>.